

**CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 19, 2001**  
**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

---

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order September 19, 2001 at 10:05 a.m. at the Los Angeles City Hall East, Room 300, 200 North Main Street, Los Angeles, California.

Members Present:      Rod Diridon, Chairperson  
                             Edward P. Graveline  
                             Jerry Epstein  
                             John P. Fowler  
                             Ben L. Hom

Members Absent:      Leland Wong, Vice Chairperson  
                             Ernest A. Bates  
                             William E. Leonard  
                             T.J. Stapleton

**Approval of Minutes for August 1, 2001 Meeting**

Chairperson Diridon presented the minutes for approval. The minutes were approved 5-0.

**Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation**

Chairperson Diridon presented the list of meetings for compensation. Member Fowler moved to approve the list. Member Hom seconded the motion, which carried 5-0.

**Members' Report**

Member Epstein reported Congressman Elton Gallegly informed him that he might be called to testify in Washington, D.C. on security issues at airports. Member Epstein stated Congressman Gallegly expressed his support of the high-speed rail project.

Member Graveline reported he has the opportunity to meet with the leaders of nine of the counties in the Kern County Council of Government on October 12, 2001. Member Graveline stated the events of last week have made it clear that high-speed rail is an alternative transportation mode that needs consideration. Member Graveline added the infrastructure we build has to be an infrastructure with many options, so that it cannot easily be shutdown. Member Fowler reported SANDAG will schedule a meeting before the November 14<sup>th</sup> Authority Board meeting and the agency will have comments on the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego and the Los Angeles-Inland Empire-San Diego corridor.

Chairperson Diridon reported he has met with various consultants and with Amtrak representatives. He stated he has given speeches to the Common Wealth Club of California, the San Jose Rotary Club and a briefing to the Night Rider Newspaper executive staff on high-speed rail. Chairperson Diridon reinforced Member Graveline's comment about high-speed rail being an attractive travel alternative especially during times of difficulty such as this country is currently enduring.

**Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Morshed reported on one bill authored by Senator Costa.

- SB796 – Designates the Secretary of Business, Transportation & Housing and the Director of Caltrans as two of the five gubernatorial appointed, voting members of the board. The bill currently is awaiting further action by the Assembly.

Executive Director Morshed reported on the continuing discussion with Caltrans regarding the Authority taking on the task of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in the LOSSAN corridor. Executive Director reported the agreements and scope of work are currently being drafted.

Executive Director Morshed reported the Authority also plans to apply to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for Proposition 116 funds to complete the work in the Bakersfield–Los Angeles corridor. The Authority’s objective is to perform a thorough evaluation of various tunneling techniques and procedures to determine the best way of crossing the two mountain ranges in this corridor. Executive Director Morshed reported staff is initiating an effort of trying to optimize the route through the mountain crossing by means of newly designed software. Staff is currently negotiating with a software contractor. The tunneling evaluation and optimization software will aid the Board in making decisions during the screening process.

During the August, 2001 Authority meeting, Warren Weber, Director, Caltrans - Division of Rail reported the Senate version of the Federal budget included funds for high-speed rail. Executive Director Morshed confirmed the Federal budget includes a \$4.5 million appropriation for high-speed rail in California. Senator Dianne Feinstein put this into the Federal budget and the Authority is currently pursuing obtaining these funds.

Executive Director Morshed stated the report detailing staff’s meetings with elected officials, previously sent to Board members on a weekly basis, has not been sent out during the last month, because staff has been working on the draft reports and not attending many meetings with elected officials. Executive Director reported on one meeting he and Deputy Director Dan Leavitt recently attended with Councilwoman Ruth Galanter of Los Angeles. Executive Director Morshed publicly thanked Councilwoman Galanter for graciously arranging for the Authority to hold this Board meeting.

Member Epstein stated due to the Authority not receiving necessary funding to continue the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), he feels the Authority should hold a special meeting with State Legislators, namely the Speaker of the Assembly and the Pro Tem of the Senate. Chairperson Diridon reported that he has met with U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Norman Mineta on this subject. Furthermore, both he and Executive Director Morshed are diligently working to schedule meetings with the Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing Agency as well as the Chairpersons of the Senate and Assembly Transportation Committee. Chairperson Diridon stated Secretary Mineta is strongly supportive of high-speed rail. Chairperson Diridon assured that he and Vice Chairperson Wong would meet with the required people as quickly as possible.

#### **Sacramento-Bakersfield Alignments & Stations Evaluation Report (Draft)**

Executive Director Morshed gave an overview of this item and reported staff recommendations will be presented to the Board in November, 2001 and voted on in January, 2002. Executive Director Morshed reported this corridor is unique in that it’s up to 275 miles long, and it is also important to note, the route and station locations of this corridor will have a significantly larger impact on the rural and urban communities in and around the corridor. Executive Director Morshed introduced Al Witzig, Project Manager, DMJM/Harris. Mr. Witzig presented high-speed rail alignment and station options evaluated and a preliminary environmental assessment of those options for the Sacramento-Bakersfield corridor. A copy of Mr. Witzig’s presentation is available upon request.

#### **Public Comment**

##### **Beatrice Sieve, South Pasadena Transportation Commission**

Ms. Sieve was curious about alignments being readily available. Chairperson Diridon stated first the optimum technical alternative must be identified and then we will have to work with the rail system after the optimum technical alternative is identified.

### **First Screening Report (Draft)**

Executive Director Morshed presented background information on this item, stating the Authority started with the Scoping process and is currently at the first level of analysis and screening. Executive Director Morshed stated that today, staff will present some recommendations upon which alternatives should be screened out. The decision that the Board makes should be based on the following criteria:

1. Supported by data and fact
2. Obvious weakness or flaws which make an alternative infeasible or unreasonable
3. Minimize the legal challenges

Executive Director Morshed stated the staff recommendations are an information item. Therefore, the Board and the public will have two months to provide staff with their comments on the recommendations. Upon receipt of comments staff can modify the recommendations and present revised staff recommendations at the November Board meeting.

A discussion took place between the Authority Board members and staff about voting on Sac-Bakersfield corridor in November. The common objective is to allow time to receive and consider public comment without delaying the project. It was determined the Authority will move ahead to vote on all corridors in November and schedule an Authority meeting in October with the objective of receiving additional public comment.

Deputy Director Dan Leavitt presented the recommendations for alignments, station locations and high-speed train systems for further evaluation for the Bay Area-Merced corridor. Deputy Director Carrie Pourvahidi presented recommendations for alignments, station locations and high-speed train systems for further evaluation in the Bakersfield-Los Angeles corridor. Dan Leavitt presented recommendations for alignments, station locations and high-speed train systems for further evaluation in the Los Angeles-Inland Empire-San Diego and Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego corridor. A copy of the staff recommendation presentation is available upon request. Commenting on the LOSSAN recommendations, member Fowler stated the Marine Corp expressed concern pertaining to the Miramar alignment, which is on the edge of their property. SANDAG will schedule a meeting that may result in a further recommendation on the high-speed rail alignment in Miramar. Member Fowler further stated he feels the recommendation on Qualcomm stadium has a lot of difficulties, i.e., stops short of downtown, does not reach the airport, and therefore, does not serve the town of San Diego.

### **Public Comment**

#### **Ann Capela, County of Imperial**

Ms. Capela reported the County of Imperial has been discussing the issue of the San Diego airport location, and one of the solutions to the airport location issue is to move the airport to Imperial County. Not having high-speed rail go to El Centro would hinder relocating the San Diego airport to Imperial County. Ms. Capela stated she has the support of five Board Members who are now looking to align themselves with San Diego and SANDAG, instead of SCAG. Ms. Capela requested the Board to consider extending high-speed rail to Imperial County. Ms. Capela further requested a meeting the Executive Director Morshed and Chairperson Diridon.

#### **Ralph Bauer, City of Huntington Beach, & Orange County League of California Cities**

Mr. Bauer reported the League of Cities nor the Council of Governments in Orange County are aware of the status of the high-speed rail project, and all 34 cities would be interested in the project. Therefore, Mr. Bauer urged the Authority to improve its outreach efforts. Mr. Bauer invited the Authority to schedule one of its meetings in Orange County. Mr. Bauer also offered his assistance in lobbying the legislature in behalf of the Authority.

**James Hare, City of San Clemente**

Mr. Hare expressed his concerns about the expansion of service or new construction on the bluff front and seacoast of the city of San Clemente. Therefore, Mr. Hare requested the Authority maintain all alternatives that would provide bypass alternatives for the community. Mr. Hare expressed his appreciation for the work of the Authority and the access/interaction to Authority staff.

Chairperson Diridon asked Amtrak and Caltrans if they were satisfied with the progression of the Authority's work.

**Ron Scolaro, Amtrak**

Mr. Scolaro stated he is participating in the Orange County and San Diego Group and the results of the evaluation are satisfactory as far as Amtrak is concerned.

**Warren Weber, Director, Caltrans-Division of Rail**

Mr. Weber stated he is comfortable with the way things are progressing and Caltrans is moving forward with funding as proposed last month.

Executive Director Morshed stated if the Board approves the recommendations that are presented today, the high-speed train system would be considerably different than what the Authority started with at the beginning of this process. The differences include the elimination of the high-speed line directly into LAX. In the Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego corridor, the electrified, non-transfer high-speed travel would occur only to an Orange County central location. The Los Angeles-San Diego high-speed train network involving non-electrified would not be exclusive guideways and not necessarily grade separated. Executive Director Morshed stated that the recommendations between San Jose-San Francisco are limited to a shared track configuration with an improved Caltrain commuter service. This will significantly reduce options of vehicles and systems. For example, it will not allow for a Maglev system or some of the current steel-wheel-on-steel systems. The Authority sent a letter to major manufacturers asking them to provide an assessment of their ability to manufacture and provide equipment that would be able to operate over 200 miles per hour and still meet the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requirements for mixed use. The responses staff received indicated this was possible. Being limited to a shared-use guideway will also substantially reduce costs. However, the reason this alternative is being eliminated remains technical.

Chairperson Diridon expressed the importance of the elimination of any alternatives that are not viable. If any alternatives are being considered for solely political reasons, with no long-term intention, it should be eliminated. Member Epstein urged the Authority staff to contact the surrounding cities of the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the current recommendations.

**Scoping Report (Draft)**

Director Dan Leavitt stated the Board has previously received reports regarding the scoping period, which is now completed. However, one of the requirements of the environmental process is to create a Scoping Report and make it available to the public. Deputy Director Dan Leavitt announced this report is available on the Authority's website. Deputy Director Dan Leavitt introduced Kip Field, Parsons Brinckerhoff. Mr. Field presented a summary of the scoping meetings held statewide and the comments received during the formal scoping period. A copy of this report is available upon request.

**Public Comment****Terry Stubbins, City of Palmdale**

Ms. Stubbins expressed she feels the I-5 corridor within the Bakersfield-LA corridor should be eliminated from further evaluation. Chairperson Diridon suggested Ms. Stubbins work with the local area governments of the I-5 corridor and Palmdale and come forward with a joint resolution. Ms. Stubbins stated she would follow up on this request and supply public comments at the October Board meeting.

**Neil Cummings, American Magline Group and California-Nevada Superspeed Train Commission**

Mr. Cummings expressed his support for the work of the Authority. Mr. Cummings stated his focus is on the Las Vegas-Anaheim-I-15 corridor. Mr. Cummings feels their system is complimentary to the Authority's project.

**Ralph Bauer, City of Huntington Beach, & Orange County League of California Cities**

Mr. Bauer expressed strong support for high-speed rail and urged the Authority to continue to move forward with the project.

**Doug Barna, Acton Town Council**

Mr. Barna expressed his satisfaction of the current staff recommendations for alignments and station locations. Mr. Barna mentioned Las Vegas built a low speed Maglev system and expressed his frustration with the talk of catenary systems to supply the electricity to high-speed trains adding third rail systems have good safety records. Mr. Barna further stated government can deliver infrastructures to its communities cost effectively.

**Identification of Date and Location of Next Meeting**

Chairperson Diridon announced the next California High-Speed Rail Authority Board meeting will be in October, 2001, location to be determined. Chairperson Diridon presented the draft 2002 proposed meeting schedule for approval with the understanding the schedule could change at any given time. Member Epstein moved to approve the proposed schedule. Member Fowler seconded the motion, which carried 5-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.